Problem of spurious drugs

*393. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Even the Chemist does not know which one is fake" which appeared in the Times of India, dated the 7th July, 2001;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to control the problem of spurious drugs flooding the market?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government are aware that the manufacture, sale and distribution of spurious drugs, a clandestine illegal activity, is indulged in by some unscrupulous and anti-social persons.

Under the provisions of Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and Rules thereunder, State Governments have been empowered to enforce quality of drugs including check on manufacture or sale of spurious drugs. The said Act was amended in 1982 to provide for specific definition of spurious drugs and severe penalties extending to life imprisonment have been prescribed.

State Governments have been advised from time to time to provide adequate enforcement machinery and drug testing facilities and to keep strict surveillance over the inter-state movement of spurious drugs. Facilities of Central Government testing labs have also been made available to the States for testing of drugs besides financial assistance provided to them to augment and strengthen their testing capabilities.

The Drugs Controller General (India) has advised the State Drugs Controller to take the following measures for curbing the incidence of spurious drugs:

(i) Constitution/reactivation of State Drug Advisory Committees in which various trade and industry association as well as consumer association should find representation.

(ii) Establishment of separate intelligence-cum-legal machinery with police assistance.

(iii) Training to be provided to selected Officials of Drug Control Administration in the modalities of intelligence work, prosecution etc. in respect of Spurious/Counterfeit drugs.

(iv) To ensure speedy analysis of drugs samples by establishing own state level drug testing facilities.

(v) State Drugs Control Authorities to be cautious while approving licences for drug products to ensure that "look-alike" products are not encouraged.

(vi) To develop efficient communication facilities and recall procedures.

(vii) To undertake surveillance of suspected dealers.

(viii) To engage experienced counsel for fighting spurious drug cases.

(ix) To obtain Cooperation of Pharmaceutical Industry by regular interaction with them.

(x) To collect survey samples under Naitonal Survey Quality Evaluation of Drug (NSQED) programme.

In addition, the following steps have been taken:—

(1) The All India Organisation of Chemist and Druggist Association (AIOCD) holds National Pharmacy Weeks from time to time to create awareness among the public. Do's and Donot's for consumers are also published.

(2) The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of DGHS on July 18, 2001 to go into all aspects of the menace of Spurious drugs and suggest remedial measures.

(3) The problem of manufacture and sale of spurious drugs and the need to ensure its checking has been specifically explained to State Health Ministers during the meeting of Central Council of Health & Family Welfare.

Modernisation of Hospitals in Arunachal Pradesh

*394. SHRI NABAM REBIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of hospitals modernised and expanded in Arunachal Pradesh during the Ninth Plan; and

(b) the name of hospitals in the State proposed to be modernised and expanded during the next three years?